

Social Justice, November 13, 1939, p. 5, col. 4:

Explanation

Fr. Coughlin Returns Check

Questionable alliances of leaders of the so-called Christian Mobilizers, who make unauthorized use of the names of Father Coughlin and Social Justice, would seriously compromise Father Coughlin if, by accepting aid from them, he could be linked with their questionable activities. Just that sort of "frame" is hoped for by certain un-American interests now boring from within these Christian organizations. Father Coughlin's letter explains itself:

November 1, 1939

Mrs. Mary S. Reilly  
611 Concord Ave.  
Bronx, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Reilly:

Your registered letter of October 30th has been received by me today, containing a Secretary's Check No. 79225 drawn on the Bronx County Trust Company in the amount of \$128.00 covering the proceeds received from the dance sponsored recently by the Christian Mobilizers.

We know that at least 90 per cent of those who belong to the Christian Mobilizers are good people and friends of social justice. Unfortunately, the followers have been led by Mr. McWilliams into an alliance with the Bund, which no one can gainsay is an un-American organization.

We are in a quandary here insofar as we do not wish to offend the 90 per cent of the fine people who, through imprudent leadership under the name of Christian Mobilizers, have been disparaged in the eyes of the public. I want them to realize that if I should applaud the Christian Mobilizers for the work it is doing, I would not be applauding the followers, but applauding the leaders and, consequently, would jeopardize my own position, the cause for which I stand

and the millions of good people who are following me.

Now, as matters exist today, the acceptance of the generous check, the total of which represents actual sacrifices on the part of hundreds of fine people like yourself, would soon be public and would tie me up indefensibly with the Christian Mobilizers and thence with the Nazi-Bund. That would be an untenable position. Meanwhile, Mr. McWilliams has not repudiated the Bund. He has not seen fit to follow the advice that I have constantly given through the columns of Social Justice magazine to all organizations which I consider American and Christian. And he has not seen fit to omit the use of my name and that of Social Justice in his contacts with the Bund. I do not think it an affront to you and to the other fine people when you receive this check. I am simply returning it to protect you and to protect myself. As far as I know, the Christian Mobilizers' party was held without any authorization from me.

Now I do not want you to lose faith in our cause or to think that I am straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. As much as I need \$128.00, I would rather sacrifice it than put myself in the position of being harmful to you and to all your associates who are innocent of the activities of some of your leaders.

Wishing that you will kindly understand the message I am trying to convey to you and that you will hold no animosity toward me for this most unpleasant task which I am performing, may I remain

Cordially yours,

Chas. E. Coughlin

P.S. To facilitate matters for you in explaining this situation to the other members of the Christian Mobilizers, I will make this letter public.